

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A tampon showing improved leakage protection through improved expansion characteristics is disclosed. The tampons disclosed demonstrate these improved expansion characteristics particularly in the width dimension without introducing new drawbacks. Preferred tampons are described which are compressed to an initial size comparable to current tampons, but which expand to a width exceeding that achieved by current tampons. Such increased expansion is preferably accomplished without an increase in the total absorbency of the tampon. Tampons of various absorbencies are disclosed having increased total expansion in the width direction compared to current tampons. Additionally, tampons of various absorbencies which expand to a greater degree in the width direction under pressure are also disclosed. Tampons of various absorbencies which expand at a rate exceeding that achieved previously are also disclosed. Microwave conditioning of tampon pledgets following compression is disclosed as part of the tampon formation process.

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